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Mrs. Ruth Long

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DEAN STUDIOS, DEPT. 3-219
211 W. 7TH ST., ONE MORRIS 2, IOWA

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THE LAST HIDING PLACE

WHEREVER THE FORCES OF EVIL HAVE GATHERED, FATE HAS ALSO PRESENT TO TIP THE SCALES OF FORTUNE AGAINST THOSE HUMANS WHO TRIED TO USE THE POWERS OF WISDOMNESS FOR THEIR OWN GREEDY ENDS! AND DROPPED THE HAND OF FATE HAS DIPPED INTO STRANGE PLACES, NONE MORE BECAUSE THAN MADAME LUSTETTE'S CARNIVAL TENT SHOW, THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HORROR...

MUST
ADMISS
ON CHILDREN

2



THE FATEFUL EVENTS BEGAN THE NIGHT THE POLICE BROKE INTO THE MIDDLE OF LUSTETTE'S MAGARNE FITON...

EVERYBODY STAND JUST WHERE THEY ARE! NOBODY LEAVES THIS TENT!

HEY! WHAT IS THIS? I'M RUNNING A LEGIT SHOW! WHY THE HELL?



SORRY, LADY, BUT WE'RE LOOKING FOR TWO CROOKS WHO RESSUED THE MAIN OFFICE A HALF HOUR AGO! WE'VE GOT 'EM TRAPPED ON THE GARYN' GROUNDS

AND ONE OF 'EM IS WOUNDED! YOU SEEN 'EM?

AIN'T NO PLACE FOR 'EM TO HIDE HERE! MAKE YOUR SEARCH AND CLEAR OUT SO I CAN GO ON WITH THE SHOW!



NO PLACE FOR 'EM TO HIDE, EH? THOSE WAX DUMMIES ARE HOLLOW, AREN'T THEY? LOOK! BLOOD SEEPING OUT OF THAT ONE!

W-H-WHAT? WHERE?

SHOOT THE THING TO SWITHEREDNS, HEH! IT IS SRETT HARRISHAN HIDEIN IN THERE AND HE'S A KILLER/CAN'T TAKE ANY CHANCES!

NO! STOP! YOU- YOU'RE MAKIN' MY CONSCIENCE!

LOOK! THAT ONE'S MOVIN', TOO! HARRISHAN'S PARTNER IN CRIME, NITA DELL, MUST BE IN THAT ONE! SHOOT HER DOWN OR SHE'LL KILL ONE OF US!

OH, NO!



NOT HER, TOO, SARGE! THIS NAKED UP FOR ONE OF OUR BOYS THEY KILLED!

THEY'RE SHOOTING UP MY WHOLE SHOW! CURSE THEM! CURSE THEM ALL! GO H-H-H!

STILL A SLIGHT PULSE IN BOTH OF 'EM SARGE! BETTER CALL AN AMBULANCE!

STOP THAT CARRY-ING ON, LAD! THE CITY WILL MAKE GOOD ON ANY DAMAGE DONE - PROVIDED YOU CAN PROVE YOU DIDN'T KNOW THESE TWO WERE USIN' YOUR SHOW FOR A HIDEOUT!

THE FIGURES OF THE TIGER WOMAN AND WEREWOLF CAN'T BE REPLACED, POOL! THEY WERE PRICELESS! THEIR UNBELIEVABLE LIFELIKE REALISM WAS CREATED BY MIXING INTO WAX THE ACTUAL BLOOD OF A REAL WEREWOLF AND TIGERWOMAN, CAUGHT AND KILLED IN INDIA!



HA HA! THAT'S A GOOD ONE! A REAL WEREWOLF AND TIGERWOMAN, EH? NO NO! THE OLD GAL REALLY BELIEVES IN SUCH THINGS!

LAUGH, YOU BOONS! GO AHEAD AND LAUGH! YOU'LL BOON SEE!





AFTER THE POLICE HAD GONE, LISETTE RETURNED TO THE REAR OF THE TENT, WHERE...

ONE OF MY ANCESTORS WAS BURNED AS A WITCH IN ANCIENT SALEM! HER "WITCHES HANDBOOK" HAD BEEN PASSED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION, BUT NONE HAD DARED OPEN IT, NOT EVEN I... UNTIL NOW!



I WILL GET REVENGE ON THE ACCUSED POLICE FOR WRECKING MY SHOW, IF I HAVE TO CALL ON THE SERVICES OF THE DARK PRINCE HIMSELF!... AH! HERE IT IS! "INSTRUCTIONS FOR WREAKING BLACK REVENGE ON ONE'S ENEMIES!"



CASELY FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS, LISETTE FOUND AN OLD SAGE-SPIN, KNOWN IN IT A WITCH'S BANE...

THE BOOK SAYS THAT SOON DEMONS WILL ARISE FROM THE VAPORS AND THEY WILL KNOW ALL YOUR PROBLEMS AND GIVE YOU ALL THE ANSWERS! RISE FROM THE STEAM, OH, SONS OF SATAN!



AND SOON...

BE NOT FRIGHTENED, LISETTE! WE ARE HAPPY TO BE CALLED FORTH FROM THE OTHER WORLD AFTER SO LONG! LISTEN CLOSELY!



BECAUSE BLIND OF THE ORIGINAL WERE-WOLF AND TIGER-WOMAN WERE USED IN THE MOLDING OF YOUR WAX FIGURES, BOTH THOSE CREATURES LIVE IN THE NETHER WORLD OF THE GREEKS! YOU CAN CALL THEM FORTH TO HELP YOU GET REVENGE ON THE POLICE!

SCATTER THE PIECES OF BROKEN WAX FROM THOSE FIGURES INTO THE CAULDRON AND MELT THEM THERE! THE WERE-WOLF AND TIGER-WOMAN WILL THEN COME TO LIFE! THEY'LL BE YOUR ALLIES!



I CAN LOSE NOTHING! I WILL TRY IT!

A FEW MINUTES LATER...

THERE! I WENT AND GOT THE PIECES OF WAX! NOW INTO THE CAULDRON THEY GO... HEY! THE LITTLE DEMONS ARE HAUNTING!



YOU! OUR WICKED WORK IS DONE!... FOR THE MOMENT!



ALMOST IMMEDIATELY THE EFFECTS OF LISETTE'S WITCHCRAFT WERE SEEN IN THE PRISON YARD OF THE LOCAL HOSPITAL...

HEARD MOANING FROM NITA BELL'S BED! BETTER LOOK AND—
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HER FACE?
IT'S CHANGING!







AS THE ELATED
MIGHT MORE ON,
THE WEREWOLF
AND TIGERWOMAN
STRUCK TERROR
THROUGHOUT THE
CITY, BUT FATE
WAS SOON TO TAKE
A HAND...

WHILE, BACK AT THE CARNIVAL, LIZETTE SLEAZES OVER THE
TERROR-FRAGILE BE WS...

NONE OF US IS SAFE, I TELL YOU! THESE
OTHER-WORLD CREATURES ARE ATTACKING
AT RANDOM LIKE WILD BEASTS! THE
OFFICIALS HAVE GOT TO DO SOMETHING
TO STOP 'EM!

BUT WHAT? THE
POLICE ARE POWER-
LESS! BULLETS
HAVE NO EFFECT!

THE POLICE ARE POWERLESS, BUT PERHAPS
I AM NOT! AND NOW THAT MY VENGEANCE
ON THE POLICE IS COMPLETE, PERHAPS
I CAN CONVERT MY WITCHING
POWERS INTO CASH!



YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE STIRRED UP
A NEW WITCH'S BIRD, LIZETTE! IT
WILL DO YOU NO GOOD! YOUR
EVENTUAL FATE
IS ALREADY
PRE-ORDAINED!

ANY THERE ARE
THE DEMONS
AGAIN! HELP ME
WITH MY NEW
PROBLEM, PLEASE!

YOU WISH NOW TO CAPITALIZE
ON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE
WEREWOLF AND TIGERWOMAN,
O POWERFUL WITCH! LISTEN
CLOSELY! WE'LL SUMMON THEM
HERE AND YOU'LL GET THEM
EIGHTO DRINK THE WITCH'S BARK
THEN THE RESULT YOU WISH
WILL BE ACHIEVED!

THE DEMONS VANISHED AFTER
GIVING ME THAT MESSAGE, BUT
I'M SO CERTAIN THEY'LL KEEP
THEM FROM ME, I'M GOING NOW
TO THE TOWN OFFICIALS TO MAKE
MY DEMAND!





LORETTA ARRIVED AT TOWN HALL WHILE AN EMERGENCY MEETING WAS IN SESSION . .

GENTLEMEN, I HAVE A SOLUTION TO YOUR PROBLEM OF THE WEREWOLF AND TIGER WOMAN MENACE!

IT'S THE WOMAN FROM THE CARNIVAL WANDERLUST SHOW!



I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW I'LL DO IT, BUT FOR TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS I'LL PRODUCE THEIR CORPSES! BUT I MUST HAVE AN AGREEMENT IN WRITING!

PREPOSTEROUS! AN-AN OUTRAGE! BUT STILL, IF SHE CAN DO IT, PERHAPS IT WOULD BE WORTH THAT PRICE!



A FEW MOMENTS LATER . .

IN THEIR DESPERATION THEY FINALLY HAD TO AGREE! NOW, IF THE DEMON'S INSTRUCTIONS WORK, I'LL SOON BE RICH! RICH!



AND THE TEN THOUSAND I GET FOR THIS MAY ONLY BE THE BEGINNING! THERE MUST BE OTHER WAYS I CAN MAKE MONEY OUT OF WITCHCRAFT!

PERHAPS, WOOD WOMAN, IF YOUR RATE DOESN'T CATCH UP WITH YOU TOO SOON!



AS SHE ENTERED HER TENT . .

THE DEMONS SURROUNDED US HERE, I WITCH! WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH US?

WELL, I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR BEING ALIVE, THOUGH IN A DIFFERENT FORM. NOW I CAN ALSO USE MY SIBING POWER TO CHANGE YOU BACK TO HUMANS, SO THAT YOU MAY LIVE NORMALLY AGAIN, IF YOU WISH!



WE DO! WE DO! WE'RE BOTH TIRED OF BEING HUNTED LIKE BEASTS!

VERY WELL! THE METHOD IS SIMPLE! YOU MERELY REPEAT THE WORDS I TELL YOU AND DRINK A TOAST TO EACH OTHER FROM THESE MAGIC COBLETS!



THERE! THE COBLETS ARE FILLED WITH THE MYSTIC WITCH'S BREW! NOW FOR THE TOAST! REPEAT IT AFTER ME, TO EACH OTHER!



TO THE POWERS OF ANGER
AND HATE!
WE DRINK TO CHANGE
OUR FATE!



AS THE POWERFUL
DEVIL'S POTION DID ITS
WORK, THE TWO OTHER-
WORLD CREATURES
WERE SUDDENLY CON-
SCIOUS WITH DEMONIC MADNESS FOR
EACH OTHER...

SEE! IT WORKED! THEY
CAN NO LONGER EVEN
STAND THE SIGHT OF
EACH OTHER!
THEY'RE FIGHTING!

YES! YES!
THIS IS
THEIR
FIGHT!
THEY'LL
KILL EACH
OTHER!



There was a vicious struggle
and...

IT'S EVERY BOTH ARE
DEAD AT LAST! THEY'VE DESTROYED
EACH OTHER! ALL THAT'S LEFT IS
TO SUMMON THE TOWN OFFICIALS
AND COLLECT MY REWARD!



A HALF HOUR LATER...

ENTER, GENTLEMEN! MY
END OF THE CONTRACT
IS FULFILLED! INSIDE
YOU WILL FIND THE WEREWOLF
AND THE TIGERWOMAN... DEAD!

IF TRUE, IT'LL
BE WORTH
THE PRICE!



WHY, THESE ARE THE DEAD
BODIES OF MIRA DELL AND GREY
MAHRIAN! YOU'VE KILLED OUR
PRISONERS... WARDS OF THE
CITY! THAT'LL REAR A MURDER
CHARGE, LORDE!

SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG!
WITH DEATH THEY-THEY'VE
CHANGED BACK TO THEIR
HUMAN FORM!



YOU'RE NOT GOING TO PIN ANY
MURDER CHARGE ON ME! I'M
SETTING
OUT ON-

COME BACK HERE,
YOU!...WAIT! SHE'S
RUN INTO THAT CAR-
BOMB! THE FIRE'S
CAUGHT AT HER CLOTHES!



UGH! BY THE TIME WE RETURNED
WITH THE WATER IT WAS TOO LATE!
SHE BURNED TO DEATH!

YES, AND SO LORDE SUFFERED
THE SAME DEATH AS HER UNHOLY
ANCESTOR AT SALEM... BUT WAS
THIS JUST A COINCIDENCE, ANOTHER
ACCIDENT?... OR WAS IT FATE?

A Hand of FATE Mystery

40-37

THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD WAS NEVER MORE ASTONISHED THAN BY THE EXPERIMENTS OF A YOUNG ASSISTANT TO PROFESSOR HAYGUS KEELER, A BRILLIANT BOTANIST OF THE LATE 19TH CENTURY. THE WRITTEN RECORDS OF HIS FORMULAS AND EXPERIMENTS HAVE LONG BEEN DESTROYED, BUT THE WEIRD RESULTS REMAIN TO PEEP-LEK MEN'S MINDS. IT BEGAN IN THEIR LABORATORY ONE NIGHT, WHEN THE ASSISTANT CONFIDED HIS IDEAS TO PROFESSOR KEELER . . .

THIS LIQUID CAN CRUISE PLANT LIFE TO LIVE AND SURVIVE LIKE A CARNIVORE. IT WILL TURN A PLANT INTO A FLESH EATER! MY TESTS ARE NEARLY COMPLETED!

WHAT PURPOSE WILL YOU SERVE HUMANITY BY THIS DEVELOPMENT? YOU ARE DEALING WITH CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND NATURE. YOU MUST STOP THIS MAD EXPLORATION!



SUDDENLY, AN ANGUISHED SCREAM SHAKENED PROFESSOR KEELER! HE RACED TO THE LABORATORY...



THE PLANT RANGELY WITHERED AND DIED UNDER THE AYE . . .



THE ASSISTANT DISOBEYED THE PROFESSOR'S ORDERS, AND WHEN KEELER RETURNED FOR THE NIGHT



THE PROFESSOR ISSUED AN AYE AND HACKED AT THE MURDERING PLANT



THE ASSISTANT THEN DESTROYED ALL HIS RECORDS AND NOTES ON THE EXPERIMENT



THAT, ONE OF THE DEEPEST FEARS IN THE REALM OF THE ASTONISHING CAME TO AN END.

THE END

Rendezvous with the PHANTOM GYPSIES



SOMETIME I WOULD
HEAR THE HORRORS AT
THE HORRIBLE CAMP-
AND TALKING ABOUT
ME. "WAS A HORROR
ONE THAT SCARED
THEY USED TO SAY."
"BUT WOULD SUDO IT?"
AND DARK, THE THING
ON HIS HAND, SHINE
AT HIM. "WILL NEVER
BE HAPPY, NEVER BE
LIKE THE OTHER WOM
HERE." IT USED TO CUT
ME AHEAD, TO HEAR
THOSE THINGS, BECAUSE
I KNEW THEY WERE
RIGHT. I WAS DIFFER-
ENT. FOR ONE THING, I
SUFFERED HORRIBLE
MOMENTS ABOUT
GYPSIES AND THE
STRANGE, SCARED
WORLD IN WHICH THEY
LIVED. I WAS FULL OF
FEELINGS AND
GOD COMPLAINS.
BUT THAT ALL CHANGED-
IT ALL ENDED ONE
WILD AND WINDY
NIGHT IN AUGUST...

I REMEMBER SUDDENLY
ARRIVING THAT NIGHT
SITTING SOFTLY IN
BED, AND THERE WAS A
GREAT LOUD NOISE
FILLING MY HEAD.
HEAD SHAKING. "GET
UP! GET DRESSED,
GOING! LEAVE THE
SCENARIOS! THERE'S
SOMETHING YOU HAVE
TO DO, SOMETHING
YOU HAVE TO DO NOW!
GO, GO, GO!" AND I
DIDN'T SEEM ABLE
TO RESIST...

YES! ALL RIGHT!
I'LL GO! I'LL GO!



SHOOK OUT OF THE BUILDING THE NIGHT
SEEMED DARKER, GREY AND FILLED WITH
SOME DREAD THING ABOUT TO HAPPEN. YET
SOMETHING INSIDE OF ME KEPT DRIVING
ME, MADE ME KEEP GOING...



ABOUT TWENTY CARS HAVE PASSED WITHOUT STOPPING! BETTER HURRY UP BEFORE THIS GUY CHANGES HIS MIND!



THE DRIVER INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS AL BAXTER... A TRAVELING SALESMAN. HE KEPT LOOKING AT HIS WATCHES, FURIED...

SAY, KID, I GOT A FUNNY FEELING I KNOW YOU FROM SOMEPLACE. I HAVE AN IDEA MET BEFORE? WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

OOOHH, KID? I--I DON'T REMEMBER. EVER KNOWING YOU!



JUST AS AL BAXTER BOATED TO ASK ME SOMETHING ABOUT WHERE I'D COME FROM, WHERE I WAS GOING, THE NIGHT CLOUDED UP AND A WILD ELECTRIC STORM BEGAN TO COME CRASHING OUT OF NOWHERE, TAKING HIS MIND OFF THE SUBJECT...



NEVER SAW SUCH A WILD STORM SPRING UP SO FAST, KID!

LISTEN TO THAT MOTOR, SPITTERS AND SPITTERING! IT WOULD BE JUST OUR LUCK FOR THIS OLD BEGGY TO BREAK DOWN RIGHT FROM NOWHERE IN THE MIDDLE OF A BAD STORM!



IT'S A FEW MILES, THE MOTOR COMES OUT COLD. I GET OUT OF THE CAR WITH AL BAXTER AND TRIED TO HELP HIM GET THE CAR STARTED AGAIN, BUT...



IT'S NO USE! WHEN REALLY DEAD! WE'RE STUCK HERE, I GUESS!

MAYBE WE'LL FIND A GARAGE DOWN THE ROAD!

HERE, KID, STRIP THAT SOFT-FLEECE JACKET OFF AND PUT ON THIS OLD PORCH AND WE'LL TAKE A LITTLE HIKE!



THANKS, MR. BAXTER!

AS HE STARTED TO WALK THROUGH THE DARKNESS, FOR SOME REASON WHEN I DON'T UNDERSTAND MY HEART STARTED TO POUND WITH A WILD EXCITEMENT. THEN AS HE ROUNDED A TURN...

LOOK! SOME KIND OF BIG ENCAMPMENT OVER THERE! MAYBE THEY CAN HELP US!

NOTHING LIKE TRYING!



THE BACK OF MY NECK UNCOVERED AS HE DREW CLOSER AND I SAW THAT IT WAS...

... A GYPSY CAMP!

YEAH! THEY--THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO HELP ME, DID I LET'S FORGET IT! LET'S--LET'S TURN AROUND AND GET OUT OF HERE!



THEN, SUDDENLY, AS THOUGH MATERIALIZING OUT OF THE RAINY DARKNESS OF THE NIGHT--

WHY DON'T YOU LET THE BOY WAIT UNTIL WE WILL NOT HARM HIM!

WHA... I WILL--WHERE DID YOU SEE COME FROM?



A BIG WEDDING IS ABOUT TO TAKE PLACE! THERE WILL BE DANCING, MUSIC, GREAT FEASTS! WE WILL STAY AND...



I'M AFRAID WE HINT SMART! IT IS ALWAYS GOOD FORTUNE TO HAVE STRANGERS COME IN AT A WEDDING!



WE'D BETTER DO AS THEY SAY, MR. BAXTER!

TRULY, AL BAXTER WAS FORCED TO FOLLOW INTO THE CENTER OF THE CAMP. I BLANDED AT HIS FROTHY, TRUMPET FEATURES IN THE SHINE OF THE FIRE. NEVER BEFORE HAD I SEEN SUCH A BIG MAN IN A WOMAN'S FACE. I CONTINUED TO ASK HORRIBLE STRANGERS, BODEN SENTENCES, AS THOUGH TALKING TO ANGRY...

... ACTING LIKE A FOOL! CAN'T BE BANG OVER THERE! NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF!



THE WEDDING IS BEING HELD IN THE MEETING TENT! HURRY! THE CEREMONY IS ABOUT TO START!



AS HE ENTERED THE HUGE TENT BEHIND THE WEDDING HALL TO TAKE PLACE, I WITNESSED A SCENE OF EXCITEMENT AND EXCITEMENT RIGHT OUT OF SOME OF MY WEDDING NIGHTMARES. IT IS HARD FOR ME TO EXPLAIN, BUT EVEN AMONG ALL THE GUESTS AND LAUGHTER, I SENSED AN AURA OF TERROR AND IMPENDING DOOM...



THEY, SILENTLY, THE SINGING, DANCING, AND LAUGHING CEASED. THE ATTENTION OF THE CROWD WERE SHARPLY TURNED AN OLD TRIBAL LEADER AND A YOUNG COUPLE ON A DANCE AT THE FRONT OF THE TENT...



CEASE THE FESTIVITIES, MY CHILDREN! THE TIME HAS COME! WE WILL BEGIN THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY AT ONCE!

THE TWO YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE UNITED ARE: BOSCH MARSHY AND LIDA SONAY, WHO -



GOOD MORNING! IT'S 11 AM LIDA!

THE GROOMY HAVE IS MARRIED... THE BLAME AS ATWENT!



YOU CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH THIS! LIDA IS MY GIRL! SHE LOVES ME - BELONGS TO ME! SHE CAN'T MARRY THAT MAN! I WON'T LET HER! LET ME GO!

BALANCE! YOU CANNOT INTERFERE NOW!



DO NOT BE AFRAID, BOY! SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, LIDA MET THE MAN, BAXTER, WHEN HE CAME INTO HIS TENT TO HAVE HIS FORTUNE TOLD! HE WAS VERY VIOLENT IN LOVE WITH HER! EVEN THOUGH LIDA WAS PROMISED TO BOSCH, SHE WAS YOUNG AND FOOLISH! SHE ACCUMULATED TO BAXTER'S WARBLING COURTSHIP AND FLATTERY!



THEY CAN MARRY TOGETHER, BUT IN A FEW DAYS LIDA BETTER GO ALONE! SHE HAD LEARNED THAT BAXTER WAS A CRAZY, SELFISH MAN - THAT SHE COULD NEVER LOVE HIM! SHE PUT IN HER MONTHS OF PENANCE, AND NOW SHE IS READY TO MARRY THE MAN FOR WHOM SHE WAS INTENDED!



AS THE OLD MAN FINISHED HIS STORY, I SAW ALL BAXTER'S BRUTAL FEELS FROM THE ANGER HOLDING HIM. HE EVEN WENT FURTHER WITH JEALOUS RAGE AS HE SWUNG UP A NEEDLE-POINTED FORWARD...

LIDA IS MINE, I TELL YOU HE WILL NOT MARRY HER! I'LL STOP HIM...



WHILE THE DAY WEDDINGS COULD BEING HORROR-STOCKED, AS BAXTER WHIPPED THE BOTTING BLADE THROUGH THE AIR TOWARD THE BRIDE...

... IF I HAVE TO KILL HIM!

BOSCH! LOOK OUT!

BUT THE HEROISM FORGOT TRAVELED TOO FAST! AT HEART WISHED TO SAVE AND SUAVE WITH TERROR AND SADRSS AS I SAW THE SHORER STRIKE ITS TARGET!



HE MURDERED THE GROOM! GET HIM! HE SHALL KNOW THE GYPSY VENGEANCE!



PARAGLED WITH HORROR, I WATCHED AL BAXTER ABOUT TO ESCAPE, AS AN OLD WOMAN WHISPERED FIRCELY...

YOU'RE THE LAST OF THE MARKOV, BOY! IT WILL BE UP TO YOU TO SEE THAT THE GYPSY VENGEANCE AND JUSTICE IS CARRIED OUT AGAINST THE MURDERER OF YOUR BROTHER!



MY-- MY BROTHER?
YES! YES! I PROMISE!



AIEEE! WE WILL BE TRAPPED IN THE TENT!

I CAN'T LET BAXTER GET AWAY! HE KILLED THE MAN WHO MUST BE MY BROTHER!



COME BACK, BAXTER! YOU'LL NEVER ESCAPE ME! STOP RUNNING! COME BACK!



I-- I'LL GET HIM NOW! (PFF-PUFF!) THE CAR WON'T START! HE'S TRAPPED!



WAS WHEELS' BATTERED CAR, BY SOME FREAK OF PROVIDENCE, NOT WORKING. AS IT SPED OFF DOWN THE ROAD, I TRIED TO RUN AFTER IT. I KEPT RUNNING, RUNNING, UNTIL MY LEGS BECAME TO BURN. I STAGGERED AND FELL, AND GREAT WAVES OF BLACKNESS SWIFT OVER ME...



WHEN I CAME TO, I ATTEMPTED DODGY BACK TO THE SITE OF THE GYPSY CAMP, ONLY TO FIND...

BURNED OUT! HARDLY A TRACE OF THE CAMP REMAINS! THE TENT FIRE MUST HAVE SPREAD AND DESTROYED EVERYTHING!



WHEN MY FOOT KICKED AGAINST A METAL OBJECT IN THE CHANGED GRASS, I BENT AND PICKED UP AN OLD-RASHED IRONING RING. IT WAS INSCRIBED: "TO LIDA— FROM BOBIE HARDY— 1944..."

BUT THE WEDDING— AND THE MURDER... AND THE FIRE! IT HAPPENED JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO! BUT THIS RING IS DATED TEN YEARS AGO!



THE TROOPERS WERE KING. THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE ME BACK TO THE ORPHANAGE. BUT FIRST I TOLD THEM THE THINGS I HAD SEEN THIS NIGHT. THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER, STRANGELY...

ALL THE THINGS YOU DESCRIBED HAPPENED ALL RIGHT, KID! I REMEMBER THE CASE! ONLY "TROUBLE" IS, THEY HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO, IN 1944!



THERE WAS A KID SAVED FROM THAT FIRE, THE ONLY SURVIVOR. MAKING THAT MAN BOBIE, HERE! EVEN THOUGH HE WAS ONLY THREE OR FOUR YEARS OLD AT THE TIME, IT MUST HAVE MADE AN IMPRESSION ON HIM, KID!

IT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT. I TELL YOU!



WHEN HE GOT INTO THEIR CAR AND STARTED BACK TOWARD HONOLULU, I STOPPED PROTESTING. THIRTY SEVERAL MILES DOWN THE ROAD, WE SAW...



MR. BAXTER'S CAR!

MYSTER SHOOKED INTO THAT POLE! RANISHED TO PIECES!

WHEN WE STOPPED AT THE WRECK AND I REACHED THEM, ALL MR. BAXTER'S LAMP, DEAD FISHED FROM THE CAR, A STRANGE FEELING CREEPT OVER ME. I FELT A BUNCH UP DRUM SATURATION, AND FELTER. IT SEEMED THAT I COULD HEAR THE OLD GYPSY WOMAN SAYING, "YOUR BROTHER'S DEATH IS AVOIDED, BOY! YOU CAN LIVE IN PEACE NOW!"

DEAD! IT--IT'S MR. BAXTER, ALL RIGHT! BUT HE'S CHANGED--GOTTEN OLDER! AT LEAST TEN YEARS OLDER!



HEY! THERE'S A KID'S JACKET IN HERE! WHO'S WHO IT BELONGS TO? I'M ASKING THE KID'S STORY WAS--NOT IT COULDN'T BE!

NO BETTER, NOT YOU THEN IT IS MY JACKET! THEY'D ONLY THINK I WAS CRAZY!



LATER, BACK AT THE ORPHANAGE...

SO THAT'S YOUR STORY, EDDIE? YOU CAN GO BACK TO YOUR DORMITORY NOW! IF YOU PROMISE NEVER TO RUN AWAY, YOU WON'T BE PUNISHED THIS TIME!

DON'T WORRY, GIRL! I WON'T CAUSE ANY TROUBLE ANY MORE! I--I'LL BE A CHANGED BOY FROM NOW ON!



OUTSIDE, I STOPPED AND LISTENED THROUGH THE AISYHOLD...

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THE WHOLE TALK THE BOY TOLD? HE MUST HAVE UNDERSTOOD MOST OF IT! YET THE SUNDY...

THE GYPSY STRAIN IS A STRANGE ONE! MAYBE IT WOULD BE BEST IF EVERYONE CONCERNED TRIED TO FORGET ABOUT THE MATTER!



LATER THAT DAY, BACK WITH MY FRIENDS AGAIN, ON THE BRIGHT, SUNNY MORNINGS, IT SEEMED HARD TO BELIEVE THAT LAST NIGHT HADN'T BEEN JUST ANOTHER WILD DREAM, BUT I KNEW IT WASN'T. I KNEW TOO THAT IT DIDN'T MATTER WHEN I FELT THAT FROM NOW ON, I WOULD NO LONGER BE WILD AND DIFFERENT. I WOULD BE JUST LIKE THE OTHER BOYS, AND FOR THAT, I WAS HAPPY!

THE END

A Hand of FATE Mystery

#28

THE TRADING SHIP "PALAR" SET SAIL FROM BOMBAY, INDIA, WITH FULL CARGO IN THE LATE 19TH CENTURY HEADED FOR PORT IN NEW YORK. CAPTAIN HOLLAND WAS OUT TO GET TIME RECORDS FOR THIS TRIP AND NO OBSTACLE WOULD STAND IN HIS WAY. BUT ABOARD SHIP AN INCIDENT THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF A WILD ADVENTURE TOOK PLACE. FOUR DAYS OUT, THE CREW WAS THROWN INTO AN UNUSUAL STATE OF EXCITEMENT.

CAPTAIN, THIS NATIVE IS DESPERATELY ILL. YOU WILL HAVE TO STOP AT CAPE TOWN AND GET HIM TO A HOSPITAL!

WE CAN'T! I HAVE A SCHEDULE TO KEEP! DO WHAT YOU CAN FOR HIM UNTIL WE REACH NEW YORK!

BUT THE DOCTOR'S CARE WAS NOT SUFFICIENT TO CURE THE NATIVE'S MALADY.

I WARNED YOU, CAPTAIN, THIS MAN HAS THE BLACK PLAGUE! YOU MUST PUT INTO PORT OR WE'LL ALL COME DOWN WITH IT!

I CAN'T STOP NOW! THE DEVIL WITH HIM! I DON'T CARE IF HE DIES!

THE DREADED CREW WAS FORCED TO CARRY OUT THE CAPTAIN'S ORDERS AND THE NATIVE DIED AN AGONIZING DEATH.

WHEN THE CAPTAIN REACHED NEW YORK, THE INCIDENT WAS REPORTED AND HE LOST HIS COMMISSION. HE RETIRED TO A SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN ON THE ATLANTIC COAST. ONE YEAR LATER AS HE STROLLED ON THE BEACH

HE COULD HAVE BEEN SAVED IF YOU HAD PUT INTO PORT ON TIME!

SAH? HE WAS A WORTHLESS NATIVE ANYWAY!

CAPTAIN HOLLAND... CAPTAIN HOLLAND...

WHIA... A MAN IN THE BREAKERS CALLING ME. I'LL PULL HIM OUT!

IT'S THE NATIVE I THREW OVERBOARD! AAAH!!

CAPTAIN HOLLAND DROPPED THE BODY AND FLED. HE BROUGHT A GROUP OF FISHERMEN BACK TO THE SCENE OF HIS TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE AND THEY CRUISED THE REMAINS OF THE DEAD NATIVE. BUT SEVERAL DAYS LATER, THE CAPTAIN WAS TAKEN BY A STRANGE ILLNESS. HE HAD BEEN STRUCK DOWN BY THE BLACK PLAGUE! HOW THIS ISOLATED DISEASE COULD BE CARRIED TO HIM BY ANOTHER VICTIM LONG DEAD, REMAINS A BAFFLING TALE OF REVENGE IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL.

THE END

LOUIE BRINK, HOODLUM, DIDN'T BELIEVE IN WITCHES NOR IN THEIR CURSES—BUT HE WENT BEYOND THE BARRIERS OF THIS WORLD TO ESCAPE...

THE WITCH'S WICKED WORDS



GET THEM AWAY FROM ME, YA BLASTED WITCH! THIS ISN'T THE WAY YA SAID I WAS GONNA DIE! I DON'T WANNA DURN!

YOU WON'T, LOUIE BRINK! YOU'LL DIE THE WAY I CURSED YOU THAT NIGHT YOU KILLED ME!



THAT NIGHT WAS ONLY A FEW HOURS AGO—BUT TO LOUIE BRINK IT SEEMED A THOUSAND YEARS JUST! HE HAD BROKEN INTO THE WITCH'S SHACK TO ROB HER!—AND SHE CALLED HIM AT IT...

BUT YA AIN'T GONNA SQUEAL TO THE COPS, YA OL' HAG!

CH-HE!



THE WITCH DROPPED TO THE FLOOR AND WITH HER FINAL GIGGLE OF LIFE SHE BREATHED A CURSE UPON LOUIE BRINK...

"YOU WILL DIE THE WAY YOU LIVE, LOUIE BRINK—BY THE GUN! THAT IS MY DYING CURSE UPON YOU, SCUM OF THE WORLD!"

HA! YOUR CURSE IS AS FRISKY AS YOU ARE, YA OLD HAG!



LOUIE LAUGHED AT THE WITCH'S CURSE—BUT HIS LAUGHTER DIED QUICKER THAN THE MAN HAD DIED—AND AS HE CAME OUT OF HER SNACK

CA-ROPER! BULLETS THWING!
OVER MY HEAD! IT'S THE
COPS! THEY MUST'VE
HEARD MY SHOTS!

HALT!



I BETTER SCRAM—AH!
FAST—OR THAT BLASTED
WITCH'S CURSE WILL
COME TRUE!

OF COURSE IT WILL, LOUIE
SPUNK! YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY
FROM A CURSE! WHEREVER
YOU GO YOU'LL DIE AS YOU
LIVED—BY THE SUN!



THAT CRUMMY! HE'S BE HANTIN' ME—
AH! THE COPS ARE STILL COMIN'
WITH THEIR GUNS! MAYBE I CAN
SHAKE THE SPOOK AN' THE BULLS
BY TAKIN' A DIVE OFF THIS BRIDGE!



I'LL GO AFTER
HIM, PETE! YOU
GET TO A CALL
BOX AND NOTIFY
THE RIVER POLICE!

OHAY, MIKE! THAT
HOOD DROPPED HIS
BAT HERE AND HIS
NAME'S INSIDE—
LOUIE
BRINK!



THAT CRAZY COPPER CAME IN
AFTER ME—BUT HE'S BRIMMIN'
RIGHT BY!



HA! I SAVED THEM
THE BLAME! MUST'VE
SEEN NUTS TO WORRY
ABOUT THAT WITCH'S
CURSE
COMIN' TRUE!



IT WILL COME TRUE, LOUIE SPUNK!
YOU CAN NOT ESCAPE IT! YOU'LL
DIE THE WAY YOU LIVE...
BY THE SUN!

LOUIE ESCAPED THE POLICE THAT WANTED—BUT THERE WAS NO ESCAPE FROM THE SHOOT OF THE MURDERED WITCH AS HE BREAKED THRU THE DARK TOWARD THE GANG BOSS'S HIDEOUT...

SHUT UP, YA BLASTED NERF! I GOT AWAY FROM THE COPS—THAT PROVES I AMN' SCARMA DE!

BY THE GUN, LOUIE BRINK, THAT'S THE WAY YOU WILL DIE!

HI, BOSS! I PULLED AN EXTRA JOB TONIGHT AN'...

...AN' YA GOT EVERY COP IN TOWN LOOKIN' FOR TA! THEY KNOW IT WAS YOU WHO KILLED THE WITCH—AN' THEY'VE ALREADY BEEN HERE!

YA CAN'T STAY HERE! GET OUT, YA TRIGGER-HAPPY JOCKER OR...

MY PAL MOSCIE SAYS I'M STAYIN'!

**BLAM
BLAM**

HAIL HIM, BOYS—HE RUBBED THE BOSS!

THE GANG'S—I DIDN'T KNOW YOU GUYS WERE IN THE BACK ROOM!

BUT YA AMN' GETTIN' ME!

AFTER HIM! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY OVER THE ROOF TOPS!

CRIPES! THAT BLASTED WITCH'S CURSE IS WORKIN'! THE WHOLE GANG IS AFTER MY HIDE— WITH GUNS!

HOLY SMOKES! THERE'S NO PLACE TO RUN ANYMORE! I'M TRAPPED! IF I JUMP I'LL GET SPLATTERED AN' IF I— I DON'T...

THEN YOU WILL DIE AN' E SAYS YOU WOULD, LOUIE BRINK, BY THE GUN!



THE GANG IGNORED THE PROFESSOR'S PLEAS AND THEIR BULLETS CHOPPED INTO THE TIME MACHINE! THEN, SUDDENLY THE CONTRAPTION EXPLODED INTO A BRILLIANT BALL OF ELECTRICITY...



AND WHEN THE BLINDING FLASH WAS OVER...



Nobody knew where Louie was—not even Louie! But he knew he wasn't dead because as he whirled thru the funnel of time he was still haunted by a thousand faces of the witch he had murdered . . .



YOU
WILL
DIE!

THE WAY
YOU LIVE!

BY THE
GUN!

BY THE
GUN!

THAT IS MY
DYING
CURSE!

YOU
WILL
DIE!

Over and over again the voice of the old man repeated the curse until Louie screamed in agony! Then he heard her no more—and he stopped spinning—but the light he saw made him tremble...



CA-RI-PES! WHAT
KINDA PLACE (OLD
LAME IN?) LOOK
WHAT THEM CHAR-
ACTERS ARE GOIN'
TO THAT OLD
LADY!



DEATH
BY FIRE TO
ALL WITCHES!

LET THE FLAMES
CONSUME THE DAUGHTER
OF THE DEVIL!

BUT I'M NOT A
WITCH—I'M NOT!
I-I...OM-W-WH!



THEY'RE ALL BLASPH' IN SOME
KIND OF FUNNY LINGO—AM?
THEY'RE ALL DRESSED LIKE
PEOPLE DID A LONG TIME AGO!
MERRY ONE OF 'EM CAN UNDER-
STAND MY KIND'S TALK!



HEY, THERE!
I'M A STRANGER
HERE, PAL! WHAT
PLACE IS THIS?
AM? WHAT YEAR?

MEIN GOTT!
INDEED YOU ARE
A STRANGER TO
GERMANY! AND
YOUR GARS IS
UNUSUAL—EVEN
IN THESE MODERN
DAYS OF 1930!



HOO? HOO? I
SURE TRAVELLED—
AM? I SURE MADE
A SUGGER OUTTA
THE GARS AND,
THE WITCH'S
SPOOK! HER CURSE
CAN'T COME TRUE NOW—
'CAUSE GUNS WEREN'T
EVEN INVENTED
IN 1930! HA!

MY CURSE WILL
BE CARRIED OUT,
LOUIE. BRINK! IF
YOU WILL DIE—
BY THE GUN!

*THE GERMAN OF 1934 WAS AT THE HEIGHT OF ITS WITCH-
MANIA AND THE CROWD WHICH HAD WATCHED ITS LATEST WITCH-
BURNING BEGAN TO GATHER AROUND THE STRANGE JUDGMENTED
WRET NAMED LOUIE BARK.*

WHO ARE YOU AND WHERE DO
YOU HAIL FROM? I HAVE BEEN
TO MANY LANDS BUT NEVER
HAVE I SEEN SUCH MANNER
OF DRESS AS YOU WEAR!

I'M AN AMERICAN--FROM
THE YEAR 1934! IT'S THE
LAND AND AGE OF MIRACLES!
THINGS LIKE JETS, DEEP-
FREEZERS, AUTOS--THINGS
YOU PEOPLE HAVE
NEVER SEEN!

LIKE FOR INSTANCE THIS
WRIST WATCH! HERE,
LISTEN TO IT.

HEIN DOTT! THE
THING IS SWITCHES!
IT BEATS LIKE A
HUMAN HEART!



HAN, IT'S A BAGGET.
FOR TELLIN' TIME!
AH! THIS IS A
CIGARETTE
LIGHTER...

OBSERVE! FIRE
LEAPS UP FROM
HIS FINGER-TIPS!



ONLY A WITCH
WAS SUCH
POWER!



JAH! HE IS A
WITCH!

LET'S BURN THE
WITCH AT THE
STAKE!



BEHOLD
THE
CURSED
WITCH!
UW-W-W!

SET YOUR HANDS OFF! HE, IS
JERKS! I AM! NO WITCH!
EVERYBODY IN 1934 HAS SEEN
A WRISTWATCH AND A
LIGHTER!



*BUT THAT WAS 1934--AND THE WITCH-BURNING GERMANS HAD
NEVER SEEN THE EVERYDAY SADNESS OF THE FUTURE TO THEM
IT WAS WITCHCRAFT--AND TO THEM, LOUIE WAS A WITCH. . .*

BRING THE TORCHES!
WE SHALL BURN THE
DEVIL'S SON AT THE
STAKE WHEN WE
CATCH HIM!

GA-BIPES! THE WHOLE BLASTED
TOWN IS OUT TO MAKE A HUMAN
TORCH OUT OF ME!





PACKAGE FROM A STRANGER

Franken did not hear the door open. He was sitting in the rear of the store, his ears glued to the small radio his boss let him tune in at night. Outside, the rain pelted in a steady stream. No customer would come in tonight, Franken thought, and planned to lock up early. His boss couldn't object to what he never knew, Franken reasoned. And then he heard the man cough. He came to his feet slowly.

"Umbrella?" Franken said, noting the droplets ran down the man's turned-down hat and onto his raincoat.

The man shook his head. He was tall, Franken saw; tall and lean and alert on his feet like a prizefighter poised for a blow. But his face—what showed under the turned-down brim—was obviously not that of a fighter. The nose was straight and thin; the ears had felt no damage from gloves; and no trace of scar tissue was evident. But something about the man made Franken wary.

"A suitcase?" Franken asked. "A portfolio? You wanta buy somebody a gift maybe?"

The man's face was immobile, but Franken felt the eyes beam into him like a searchlight.

"Don't you wanta buy anything, mister?" Franken said finally.

At last the man reached under his coat and took out a package covered with brown wrapping paper.

"I want to leave this here," he said. "I want to check it for a couple of days." Before Franken could object, he set the package on the counter and a twenty-dollar bill showed in his hand. "It'll be worth twenty to you," he said, "and your boss doesn't have to know."

Franken found himself nodding eagerly. His hand reached for the twenty.

"Not so fast," the man said. "Half now—and half when I pick it up... untouched."

With deft fingers he tore the twenty-dollar bill in two and handed Franken half.

"Remember—the other half when I pick it up."

As silently as he had come in, he turned and puffed out into the night. Franken studied the package awhile, wondered what value lay in it. But any thought he may have had about opening it dwindled when he remembered the man's eyes. He had the package, which was small and compact and only a little too large for a man's pocket, in the storeroom, behind a large ash-colored suitcase. It was an easy twenty, he told himself.

But the next day Franken wasn't so sure. As he read the item in the newspaper, his face blanched. On page one of the tabloid was a picture of the sharp-eyed man who'd left the package, and underneath in large letters the caption: "Thief-Killer Slain by Police Bullets."

The man had had a long police history, Franken read, and wondered what value lay in the stolen package now in his possession. He had to wait for the radio news bulletin that night before he found out. By that time the fingerprints had been checked—and were found to tally with the prints left in the private office of the Curator of the Natural Museum. The stolen package contained a rare South American leaf, which when ground and brewed, would—according to the legend quoted by the Curator—give the smoker a provision of the future. He offered five hundred dollars for the return of the *hyowa*, which the Museum had not yet subjected to tests.

"Another strange aspect of the case," continued the announcer, "is that in the dead man's pocket was found one-half of a twenty-dollar bill."

Now Franken knew he had an easy five hundred. All he had to do was turn in the package and collect. But this was the simple, the obvious, the honest thing to do—and if Franken had been honest up till now, it was not because he chose the side of the law; it was only because he had not seen the right opportunity. Now, he reasoned, if he could see into the future, anything might be his. This was the opportunity he'd waited for.

That night he locked the door to his furnished room, closed the window and pulled down the shade. When he was undressed and lying on the bed, he opened the package with trembling fingers. It was filled with brown leaves so different in appearance from ordinary tobacco leaves, but Franken was filled with tremendous curiosity. Before he ground the tobacco and set them in a bowl, he took several swigs of whiskey the better to avert the moment.

At first, after he set fire to the incense, he was aware only of a sweet, heavy, fabled aroma—and smoke curling upward toward the ceiling. The closeness of the room, the cloying sweetness of the incense and the liquor all combined to make Franken drowsy, but he forced his eyes to stay open.

And then he saw it. He sat up sharply, his eyes goggling. For what he saw was himself back in the store, but this time not an employee, not a

worker, but the owner. He laughed suggestively, knowing this could never happen.

"A fake," he muttered. "I should have turned it in for the five hundred. I haven't a chance in a million of ever owning that store."

It occurred to him then that maybe it wasn't too late to collect from the curator. "I can wrap up the package again," he thought, "and call him up in the morning. I'll get something out of it anyhow."

But when he got to the store the next morning, there was a crowd at the entrance and police aside. He decided it was no safe place for him and he started to turn away, but a little man grabbed him by the sleeve.

"This is him," the little man shouted. "This is Fraken."

Immediately the crowd pressed around them and Fraken saw there was no escape. He found himself being forced inside, fearfully facing policemen and a white-jacketed young fellow.

"We'll have to have an autopsy," the man in the white jacket said, "but there's no question his heart gave out on him. It's just an ordinary heart attack."

The little man said then to the policemen, "This is the lucky young man who worked for Mr. Mahaffey—the one named in the will. Mr. Mahaffey had no relatives, no heirs, and he left the store to Fraken. I drew up the will and I've been named executor and, I'll stand aside till the will is probated."

Only then did Fraken, relaxed now, recall having seen the little man. He had visited Mr. Mahaffey a few times in the store, but Fraken had paid no attention to him. But now the store was his, after court formalities. Now the byots had been proved to reveal the future. Now Fraken had a power in his hands that one man—the thief—had died for, and another man—Mr. Mahaffey—had died to fulfill its surgery. The byots was valuable now and he would kill, he decided, to retain it.

He did not know then how soon he would have to kill.

That night a man entered his store warily. "You're Fraken?" the man said, and showed him a badge. "We're tracing all places where a man might have left a package a few nights ago. We know he came this way and we also know only these stores were open within two blocks at that hour. We figure he may have left it in your store when you weren't looking. We checked the other two stores and there's no sign of it. And we know he didn't throw it away."

"A package?" said Fraken. "What kind?"

The plainclothes man described it.

"Why, yes," said Fraken. "A man left such a package. Told me to hold it at my home. Said

he'd phone me before he'd pick it up. Said he was being followed by them."

The plainclothes man laughed. "He—the guy who left it—was a thief. A thief and killer. Shall we go pick it up now?"

Fraken said he just wanted to get his coat from the back room. But under the coat he hid a twelve-inch length of lead-pipe. He did not want the officer's body found anywhere near where he lived so he gave the wrong address. In a dark part of town, he raised his hand.

"Here," he said, and they both got out of the car.

"That house there," he said, and as the officer turned to look, Fraken's hand struck, and struck again. And then he took to his heels and ran. . . .

He reached his room white-faced and panting. He hadn't counted on the officer tracing the byots to him, but now the last link to the strange incense was cut. Now he was really free. Or was he?

He took a drink while he wondered. And then he took another. . . . and another. He was feeling drowsy, woozy, but still frightened. And then he remembered the byots. He would try it again. Now he'd find out if anybody else knew about his crime; he'd learn if he'd ever be caught.

By the time he closed the window and drew the curtain, he was quite drunk. He weaved around the room, the bottle in his hand, upending it, gurgling from it as he undressed. He ground the leaves in unsteady hands, lying on his bed, knowing that at any moment he'd pan out from the liquor. But first he'd force himself to burn the incense. Even bleary eyes, he knew, could see what the incense would form.

He dozed for a few minutes, then woke with a start. Shapes were beginning to form in the smoke. He gurgled happily; he'd only been out for minutes. He'd still see what was in store for him before he fell asleep. He looked, and then he laughed. Laughed long and heartily. For there in the smoke he saw himself, and another figure throttling him. The figure was the dead thief. So Fraken laughed. For drunk as he was, he knew that a dead man could do him no harm. Imagine being strangled by a dead man!

So, lying on the bed, the burning incense on the low table beside him, Fraken laughed, rolling and tossing with laughter. And his hands, swinging around in drunken glee, struck the incense bowl. He felt the flame singe his body, knew some of the ashes were settling on the mattress. But he couldn't move to strike the unrelenting mattress. He couldn't see at all. . . .

Fraken did not burn to death. "Suffocation," the coroner said. "A burning mattress," he told the reporters, "can choke a man more thoroughly than any killer's hands. Fraken, being drunk, didn't have a chance."

When his NUMBER'S UP..

I'VE BEEN MIRACULOUSLY
PRESERVED FROM DEATH!
NOW I SHALL ACHIEVE MY
ANNIHILATION BECAUSE FATE
HAS TAKEN A HAND! I CAN'T
FALL WITH FATE ON MY SIDE!
HA HA!

I'VE BEEN MIRACULOUSLY
PRESERVED FROM DEATH!
NOW I SHALL ACHIEVE MY
ANNIHILATION BECAUSE FATE
HAS TAKEN A HAND! I CAN'T
FALL WITH FATE ON MY SIDE!
HA HA!

HIS LAUGHTER CAME
TOO SOON. THE DAY OF
RECKONING IS CLOSE
AT HAND!

IF THERE'S A MYSTERIOUS ELEMENT IN LIFE—AN
UNKNOWN POWER—THAT HOLDS STRAY OVER
OUR DESTINIES... IF AN INTANGIBLE FORCE THAT
OVERRIDES THE PLANS WE LAY... THAT PREDE-
TERMINES THE FINAL OUTCOME? THE ANCIENTS
BELIEVED THIS AND MEANWHILE THEY WERE
RIGHT. CERTAINLY IT WOULD APPEAR SO FROM
THE STORY OF GUYLE KRAFT, WHO SHOULD HAVE
DIED MANY TIMES... YET WHO HAS HIS DESTINY
DEFERRED.

GUYLE KRAFT THOUGHT NEITHER OF FATE NOR
OF DESTINY. THAT SEPTEMBER DAY IN 1953, AS
HE RACED TO A CONFERENCE WHICH COULD
NET HIM A MILLION...

I'VE GOT TO MAKE THAT CONFER-
ENCE ON TIME! IF THEY ACCEPT
MY BID, I'M MADE! I'LL HAVE
ALL THE LUXURIES I'VE
EVER WANTED!

THE CROSSROAD LIGHT TURNED YELLOW. LITTLE
ERNE HAD WALKED INTO THE STREET
WITH A PAPER UNDER HIS ARM FOR HIS ELDER
BROTHER...

I GOT YOUR
PAPER,
BOB!

OKAY, ERNE...
HURRY
OVER!

GUYLE DIDN'T SEE THE BOY DROP THE PAPER AND STOP TO PICK IT UP. HE WAS TOO INTENT ON BEATING THE LIGHT...

IT JUST TURNED YELLOW / IF I STOP ON IT, I CAN BEAT IT / THERE'S NO TRAFFIC ANYWHERE!



HIS FOOT PRESSED DOWN ON THE ACCELERATOR. WHEN HE SAW ERNIE IT WAS TOO LATE TO BRAKE...

ERNIE... LOOK OUT!

THAT CRAZY BOY? I CAN'T BRAKE NOW! IF I SWERVE I'LL TURN OVER... I CAN'T...



NO! NO! ...BRAKE!



IT WASN'T MY FAULT! I COULDN'T STOP... THE NID OUGHT TO BE OFF THE STREET/MURDER! NID! NOW... I MIGHT LOSE THE CONTRACT!



BUT IN THE WAKE OF GUYLE KRAFT'S FLIGHT...

ERNIE, ERNIE! TALK TO ME!... YOU'RE NOT... NOOD, HE'S DEAD!

SHUFFLED OUT! HERE'S A SMALL OBSTACLE IN GUYLE KRAFT'S RUTHLESS PATH!



THE MURDERER? I HOPE HE NEVER HAD ANY HAPPINESS AND DIED SOON - VIOLENTLY, LIKE MY BROTHER!

HIS TIME SHALL COME SOON. IT IS RECORDED IN THE SCROLL OF FATE. GUYLE KRAFT SHALL MEET WITH VIOLENT DEATH!



GUYLE ENTERED THE CONFERENCE CHAMBER ON TIME, FLUSHED AND ERECTANT

COME IN, MR. KRAFT? WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU!

I RUSHED HERE AS FAST AS I COULD, GENTLEMEN! I HAVE OUR BID WITH ME! I ASSURE YOU IT IS THE LOWEST ONE YOU CAN POSSIBLY GET!

MOMENTS LATER, AFTER PRESENTING HIS BID, HE COULDN'T BELIEVE HIS EARS. HE HAD THEN REPEAT THEIR ANSWER...

I SAID, MR. KRAFT, THAT WE'VE DECIDED TO LET ANOTHER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY BUILD OUR OFFICE BUILDING. THEIR BID WAS LOWER THAN YOURS.

THAT'S WHAT I MEANT THE FIRST TIME! I WAS A FOOL TO HURRY LIKE I DID! AH, WELL, I HAVE OTHER IDEAS IN THE PIPE!



THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN HE RETURNED TO HIS OFFICE...

HOW DID THAT DEAL WORK OUT LAST NIGHT, GUYLE?

IT WAS A BUST! JUST LIKE EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER DONE! YOU'VE LOST US MORE THAN A MILLION DOLLARS BECAUSE OF YOUR STUPID INCOMPETENCE, MURRAY!



DON'T THROW ALL THE BLAME ON ME, GUYLE! YOU CHOOSED THOSE FIGURES YOURSELF! DON'T FORGET THIS: YEAH, WITH IS A WORKING PARTNERSHIP!

YEAH, WITH ME DOING MOST OF THE WORK! HAVE YOU EVER SIGNED A CONTRACT YOURSELF? FOR TWO CENTS I OUGHT TO... NOW WHAT THE DEVIL IS THAT?



HOSTILITIES BROKE OUT AS VYMAN UNLOCKED GUYLE'S PRIVATE DOOR.

I HEARD YOU TWO GOING AT IT RIGHT THROUGH THE DOOR! CAN'T YOU RUN A BUSINESS WITHOUT FIGHTING?

NOT WITH GUYLE WHO WANTS TO MAKE HIS FIRST MILLION BEFORE HE'S THIRTY! WELL, IT'S NICE SEEING YOU, VYMAN! MAYBE YOU CAN COOL OFF ICE HOT HEAD!



WHEN THEY WERE ALONE...

I THOUGHT I HAD THE DEAL CLAMCHED THIS TIME AND EVERYTHING WE'D PLANNED WOULD BECOME A REALITY. BUT NOW...

WE'LL HAVE TO PUT OUR MARRIAGE OFF AGAIN... IS THAT IT? WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE MYTHICAL BIG DEAL DEVELOPS IN SOME INDETERMINATE FUTURE?



VYMAN'S REACTION WAS SWIFT AND ANGRY...

I'VE HAD ENOUGH! THREE YEARS I'VE WAITED UNTIL YOU COULD MAKE UP YOUR MIND! THIS ONLY PROVES YOU DON'T LOVE ME... I'M THROUGH!

VYMAN, WAIT! LET ME EXPLAIN!



VYMAN, YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU! I PROMISE IT WON'T TAKE MUCH LONGER... JUST GIVE ME A LITTLE MORE TIME!

YOU SAID THAT LAST YEAR AND THE YEAR BEFORE THAT! MAYBE THIS WILL BRING YOU TO YOUR SENSES! GOOD-BYE GUYLE!



STOPPING, UNBOWING THAT AN URGENT RATE HOOVERED NEARBY, BUTLE WALKED BACK TOWARD HIS OFFICE, UNDIFFERENT TO THE ACTIVITY OVERHEAD...



SUDDENLY A HEAVY LOW IN THE HEAVY CHAIN SNAPPED...



DOWN IT SHOT LIKE A HUNG METEOR IN FLIGHT. THERE WOULD BE THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE OF ESCAPE FOR BUTLE... BUT...



BUTLE INEARTHLY-STARTLED CATCH THE HANDLE SLAM STRUCK, LANDING WHERE BUTLE HAD STOOD BEFORE HE HEARD THE VOICE...



Several weeks later, at his office

WELL, YOU CAN START FURNISHING THAT
PICKHOUSE YOU'VE BEEN DREAMING ABOUT.
I JUST SIGNED THE CONTRACT FOR THAT
OIL FIELD CONSTRUCTION
JOB THAT'S BEEN KICKING
AROUND FOR
A YEAR!

MURRAY,
YOU'RE A SONOF
A BITCH!

I'M SORRY I EVER REJECTED
YOU! THIS IS THE BREAK
I'VE BEEN
WAITING FOR.



*On location, at the oil fields where work was almost
completed.*

C'MON UP AND TAKE A LOOK AT THE
PROGRESS WE'VE MADE! WE'LL
FINISH IN RECORD TIME! BUTLE,
YOU SHOULDN'T BE SMOKING HERE!
THERE'S HIGH OCTANE ALL
AROUND!



DON'T BE AN OLD WOMAN,
MURRAY! I'M CAREFUL!

THIS IS MY CHANCE? A
FALL INTO A STORAGE
TANK WOULD FINISH HIM!
OUR PARTNERSHIP
WOULD BE
DISSOLVED!



NICE, HUH?
ESPECIALLY
SINCE WE
STAND TO
NET TWO
HUNDRED
GRAND APECE
FROM THIS JOB!
THIS TIME I
FIGURED IT
RIGHT!

YOU FIGURED IT
WRONG AGAIN, MY
FRIEND. WE'RE NOT
GOING TO SHARE THE
PROFITS! I'M TAKING
ALL OF THEM AND
YOU'RE GOING
TO AN OIL
DEATH!



*There was nothing to grasp
but then an oil derrick's boom,
propelled by BUTLE, shot out
into space.*

A
A
A
E
E
E
E!

SO LOW, MURRAY! I
DON'T NEED YOU ANY-
MORE! A A A A A A, HE
KNOCKED THE CIGAR-
ETTE OUT OF MY
MOUTH!



*He descended quickly, search-
ing everywhere for the
smoldering cigarette. While
MURRAY WAS SCREAMING, UNHEARD,
BY AN OIL TANK.*

WHERE COULD IT HAVE FALLEN?
THE WIND MIGHT HAVE CARRIED IT
ANYWHERE! OH WELL, MINE
IT WENT OUT BY ITSELF!



*It didn't go out and it was much too late
when the first storage tank exploded . . .*

I'M SURROUNDED BY A SEA OF FLAMES!
ALL THOSE TANKS ARE GOING TO EXPLODE
AND I'LL GO WITH THEM!



THIS WOULD BE A
PERFECT HELL FOR
A MURDERER, BUT
ACCORDING TO THE
BOOK HIS TIME
HAS NOT COME...
NOT YET!



IT'S NO USE!
WHICHEVER WAY
I TURN... MORE
FLAMES! NOTHING
CAN SAVE ME NOW!
I'LL BE ROASTED
ALIVE!

AND LATE ON A PAST OCCASION WHEN
A MIRACLE WAS NEEDED TO SAVE HIM
... IT CAME

WATER? HA HA!
MY LUCK IS STILL HOLDING OUT!
I'M RESCUED AGAIN! THIS TIME
I THOUGHT I WAS IN THE
DEVIL'S OWN INFERNOS!



WHEN THE FIRE SHED DOWN

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE ALL BEEN
A BAKED! SEE, I'M STILL A LIVE!
MY DESTINY MUST BE LINKED WITH
THE SPARKS! UNFORTUNATELY, MY
PARTNER'S MIGHT HE WAS CAUGHT
IN A BLIST BEFORE
I COULD REACH
HIM!

THOSE
EXPLOSIONS
BLEW UP A WATER
MAIN! THAT'S THE
ONLY THING THAT
SAVED YOU, MR.
KRAFT!



YOU WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE
FIRE! I COULD SAVE YOU FOR
CRIMINAL NEGLIGENCE, BUT
YOUR CONSTRUCTION WORK
WILL JUST ABOUT
COVER MYSEL
LOSSES! I'LL
WRITE IT
OFF THAT
WAY!

THIS PUTS ME
BACK WHERE I
STARTED FROM!
BUT I WON'T LET IT
STOP ME. I KNOW I'M
NO GASTRANTY PERSON,
NOTHING CAN HARM
ME!



THE EVENTS OF THE NEXT FEW MONTHS ABSOLUTELY CONFIRMED STYLE HE WAS INDESTRUCTIBLE.

THE CLIENT HE HAD GIVEN TO THE
FACED WAS IMP STRUCK BY HIS
NARROW ESCAPE.

THIS HAPPENS TO ME
QUITE OFTEN! INSTINCT
TOLD ME TO STAND FAST!
IF WE HAD RUN AWAY
WE WOULD BE DEAD!



ON ANOTHER OCCASION A MILLION-
VOLT CABLE BROKE AND COILED
AROUND HIM LIKE A SNAKE

FOR HEAVEN'S
SAKE, DON'T
MOVE! IF THAT
WIRE TOUCHES
YOU, YOU'LL
FRY!

DON'T WORRY, IT
WOULDN'T WILL
YOU HURRY AND
TURN THE CURRENT
OFF! I CAN'T
STAY HERE ALL
DAY!



LATER, A FIFTY-FOOT DROP ONLY
RESULTED IN SOME LACERATIONS
AND A BROKEN ANKLE

THE JUMPING BROKE
HIS FALL, IT'S MIRACULOUS
HOW HE SURVIVED!



WHILE HE LAY RECOVERATIVE IN A LOCAL HOSPITAL,
STYLE HAD AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR

STYLE, I COULDN'T STAY AWAY!
I'VE HEARD OF ALL YOUR NARROW
ESCAPES, BUT YOU WERE ALMOST
KILLED IN THIS ONE! OH, STYLE,
LET ME HELP YOU SO YOU WON'T
HAVE TO PURSUE THIS MAD JUNCTION
OF YOURS ANYMORE!

THAT'S VERY
NICE OF YOU,
VIVIAN, BUT
WHAT CAN YOU
DO TO HELP
ME?



MY FATHER IS BUILDING A
MILLION DOLLAR SCOUT
CAMP RESORT BUILT IN
THE ALLEGHENIES. I'VE
PERSUADED HIM THAT
YOU'RE THE MAN TO DO
THE CONSTRUCTION WORK!

VIVIAN, DARLING! THAT'S
WONDERFUL NEWS! WE
WOULDN'T HAVE TO WAIT ANY-
MORE... I PROMISE! I'LL
BE OUT OF HERE IN A
WEEK AND I'LL START
ON THE PLANS RIGHT
AWAY!



A WEEK LATER GUYLE HOLDS HIS CAR UP THE HANDED TURN TO MYRA'S FATHER'S LODGE WHERE THE CONTRACT HAD TO BE SIGNED...



GUYLE, FATHER WAS DELIGHTED WITH THE PLANS YOU SENT! HE'S ALREADY DRAWN UP THE CONTRACT!

THAT'S RIGHT! AND AT THIS MOMENT I'VE GOT SOME SCOUT LEADERS WORKING UP THERE! COME INTO THE LODGE, MR. KRAFT!

FOUR HUNDRED FEET ABOVE THE LODGE, BOB REED WAS CLEARING GRASS FOR THE CAMPFIRE...



WON'T THE TROOP BE CRAZY ABOUT THIS PLACE WHEN WE HAVE IT ALL CLEARED, FELLERS!

YES, BUT WATCH THAT TREE, BOB! IT'S BEGINNING TO SWAY DANGEROUSLY! I DON'T KNOW IF THE PAPER CAN HOLD IT!

BEFORE THE WORDS WERE OUT OF HIS MOUTH...



LOOK OUT, BOB! IT'S BREAKING AWAY!

DUDE UNDER IT! GET AWAY FROM THE CLIFF!

WITH A THUNDEROUS CRASH THE WHOLE TREE TOPPLED OFF THE CLIFF, DRAGGING TONS OF DIRT AND STONES ON ITS WAY DOWN...



WHEN, THAT WAS A CLOSE CALL!

I'M GLAD FOR MORE REASONS THAN ONE THAT I ESCAPED! MY FOLKS WOULD NEVER SURVIVE THE SHOCK. A YEAR AGO MY BIG BROTHER ERNE WAS KILLED BY A HIT-AND-RUN DRIVER! THEY'VE NEVER GOTTEN OVER IT!

IN THE CASH BELOW, THE CONTRACT WAS COMPLETED JUST AS THE FIRST SMALL RUMBLE WAS HEARD...



IT'S A ROCKSLIDE! DON'T GO OUT THERE! WE'RE PERFECTLY SAFE IN HERE! WE'VE HAD THEM BEFORE!

NO, NO! SOMETHING TELLS ME I MUST LEAVE! IN THESE MATTERS I FOLLOW MY BASIC INSTINCTS! I'VE NEVER BEEN WRONG! BETTER COME WITH ME!

GUYLE JUST ABOUT REACHED THE CAR WHEN THE FULL WEIGHT OF THE AVALANCHE STRUCK...



SO BE IT! WE HAVE COME FULL CIRCLE AND GUYLE KRAFT'S DESTINY HAS BEEN FULFILLED!

WHEN THE AVALANCHE HAD STILLED...



STRANGE... HE SAID HE WAS FOLLOWING HIS INSTINCTS! IT WAS AS IF SOMETHING DROVE HIM TO HIS DEATH!

JUNE 28, 1934, NOW MY RECORD ON GUYLE KRAFT IS CLOSED! AMBITION WHICH DESTROYS LEADS ONLY TO SELF-DESTRUCTION! DEATH WAS DEFERRED UNTIL PAYMENT IN FULL WAS DUE!

THE END

Get Rid of UGLY PIMPLES this new easy way!

Amazing new medicated lotion developed by a doctor works wonders by clearing up skin blemishes in one week or less!

DON'T let a bad complexion ruin romance, spoil your fun, cause you to be embarrassed, shy or ashamed. If you suffer from acne, the common external cause of pimples among young people, try this wonderfully effective medicated lotion that was developed by a pioneering physician to clear up his own teen-ager's complexion after other methods had failed. It has produced astonishing results for many thousands of others. It is **GUARANTEED** to help you or it won't cost you a single cent!

Doesn't Show On Your Face

Keraplex is a skin-colored lotion (NOT a greasy salve or ointment!) that is quickly absorbed by the skin and gets right down to the pores where its healing and antiseptic ingredients can go to work. After you have applied it, there is no trace left on the surface. In fact, it makes a perfect powder base. . . actually improves the tone of the skin! It is pleasant and easy to use — leaving your skin soft, clean and fragrant.

Works in SIX Out of SEVEN Cases!

An analysis of **RESULTS** taken from actual case histories proves that Keraplex is successful in clearing up six of every seven cases of externally caused blackheads, pimples and other common blemishes. It is also very effective in the treatment of eczema. It tones up the complexion generally, giving it a healthy, radiant glow.

Try This New Method Without Risking A Penny!

Keraplex is **GUARANTEED** to clear up your skin troubles or there will be **NO COST** to you whatsoever. If you happen to be the **ONE** extra-stubborn case out of seven which Keraplex cannot help in one short week, it will cost you nothing to have tried it. Keraplex is sent to you with that simple, positive **GUARANTEE!**

SEND NO MONEY

You need need no money with the coupon below. When postman delivers your Keraplex lotion (in plastic wrapper marked "Personal"), drop out with him only the modest price indicated below, plus a few cents postage. Then use your Keraplex morning and night for a full week, following the simple directions which will be enclosed.

If you do not **SEE RESULTS** that delight you — if you are not fully convinced that Keraplex is clearing up your complexion — just return the empty bottle or unused portion and the purchase price will be refunded in full. Don't delay a single day. The longer you let your skin trouble go, the more difficult it will be to clear them up and get your complexion back to a healthy, clear, unblemished condition! Clip and mail the coupon **TODAY**. Unexcused Laboratories, Inc., Stamford, Conn.



BEFORE

This young man suffered from a serious case of acne for years and tried all the usual "remedies" without success.



AFTER

After using Keraplex for only one day he just one week, he had the desired improvement: pimples completely gone!



BEFORE

Her mother said a dozen blemishes on just one side of this girl's face before KERAPLEX was applied.



AFTER

Same girl had used KERAPLEX for only a day for only 4 days when she had the desired improvement.

WHAT USERS SAY:

"I was suffering from a severe case of acne . . . and with only 4 days treatment with Keraplex . . . was completely relieved!" — E. J.

"I have been completely satisfied with your lotion to help clear up the pimples on my face!" — B. W.

"I have been using Keraplex for a severe case of eczema on my hands, knees and elbows. Now my skin is completely clear!" — M. H.

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE

UNIVERSITY LABORATORIES, Inc., Dept. 4
STAMFORD, CONN.

You'll want to try Keraplex **ON APPROVAL**. Send our check to help in your decision, marked "no money". When it is delivered it will contain full personal advice, instructions, plus money. If not satisfied with the **RESULTS** I will return money (plus certain extra days for a full refund of the purchase price).

- ☐ Regular Size, \$4.95
☐ Double Quantity (Plus Bottle), \$9.95

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

☐ **TAKE PRECAUTION** Check here if you **ENCLOSE** payment, to insure cost of your product. Some payment back Guarantee applied.

Payment must be sent with all orders to be shipped to A.P.O. or Canada and foreign countries.

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